are of importance to the public, have been identified. The imports of these items are constantly monitored by a Standing Group headed by the Commerce Secretary which suggests appropriate measures to regulate the imports. Further, imports of agricultural products like wheat, rice, maize, other coarse cereals, copra and coconut oil are allowed only through the State Trading Enterprises.

Death Compensation for Gujarat Earthquake

†4317. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA : will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that compensation is not being paid for the persons who died of panic during earthquake in Gujarat, though their children have become orphans;

(b) if so, whether Government would issue directions to the State Government to locate and compensate them; and

(c) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) There is provision for payment of ex-gratia amounts to the families of the persons who die as a result of natural calamities. Such payments are not admissible where death is caused by other reasons. The ultimate judgement lies with the State Government concerned and the Central Government is not authorized under the scheme of assistance in natural calamities to issue directions in the matter.

Feed Stock costs in Fertilizer Industry

4318. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the feed stock costs make fertilizer industry uncompetitive with other countries; and

(b) if so, what steps the Ministry has taken to help the industry so that it becomes competitive in the international market ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) While the Indian Fertilizer Industry has achieved internationally competitive energy

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

efficiency norms, it is not price competitive, primarily because of high cost of hydrocarbon feed stock and raw material/inputs. In the case of nitrogenous fertilizers, plants in exporting countries are generally based on natural gas. As per available information, the cost of natural gas in those countries is around US $ 1 per million BTU or less, whereas in India the delivered cost is US $ 2 for the plants based on gas at land fall point and US $ 2.5 to 2.6 for the plants based on gas located on HBJ pipe line. The feed stock cost of the plants based on naphtha and fuel oil is still higher. The delivered cost of naphtha at the factory gate is more than US $ 7 and that of fuel oil is in the range of US $ 6 per million BTU. The reason for high production cost of urea in the country as compared to the international level is due to constraints in the availability of natural gas which is the preferred feed stock for production of urea. Efforts are under way to import Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for manufacture of urea, which is likely to be cheaper than naphtha, for manufacture of urea.

In regard to phosphatic fertilizers, the cost of Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) manufactured in India with imported intermediates works out higher than the landed cost for DAP itself.

CAG Audit of Private Fertilizer Companies

†4319. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to get the accounts of private fertilizer producing companies audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard and the reasons therefor;

(c) by when, the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) does not carry out audit of the private sector companies. For verification of the cost data submitted by the companies in the context of determination of retention price of urea produced by the urea manufacturing unit, all the companies, whether in public or private sector, have to maintain their annual accounts that are audited by the Chartered Accountants. Certification by the Chartered Accountant/Cost Accountant of the company is

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.